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ABSTRACT

A survey of all 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Guam, and American Samoa was conducted to determine each area's recommendations on coursework leading to the licensing of secondary school journalism teachers. Each area's current teacher certification bulletin was consulted, where possible, or the chief certification officer was contacted and asked to answer a short set of questions such as whether the area granted a special license in journalism, and, if so, whether there were specific recommendations concerning coursework. More than half the units surveyed (29 states plus Guam) required a specialized license for full-time teachers of journalism and journalism-related subjects. However, it was not clear how much journalism could be taught without holding the specialized license or even without any academic training at all. The requirements for a specialized license varied from state to state: some require simply a departmental major from an institution involved in teacher education while others mandate a particular sequence of courses. The results suggest a need for a standard for each state to follow. (The various requirements for each area are presented in list form at the end of the paper.) (HTH)

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Certification of Journalism Teachers

A Survey of the States

By Richard C. Gotshall
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Presented at the annual meeting of the Secondary Education Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, Corvallis, Ore.
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by Richard C. Gotshall
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In a talk at the Association for Education in Journalism convention in 1980, Thomas Eveslage presented what he called a research agenda for journalism in the secondary schools. The third item on that list of four areas was teacher training.

Certification of teachers in subject areas is not new. It's a generally accepted practice at the secondary school level. However, it is far from universal in the area of journalism.

In 1970, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education programs issued a report on certification in teaching area specializations. In an analysis, Sidney Drumheller (1971) examined the implications of that report. Professional studies were broken down into three components — content to be taught to pupils, supplementary knowledge, and humanistic and behavioral studies. He said the four problems facing the individual in the 20th Century were to solve personal and institutional social problems in a way that is mutually enhancing; communications problems; physical environment; and daily life activities. He says the study suggests not just a study of the literature of a field but the study of the potentially more relevant (to the student) study of the process of contemporary oral and written communications.

The actual debate over certification is nearly as old as public school teaching itself. Anthony G. LaBlue (1960) characterizes four periods in the discussion and debate over certification. The first period, from the colonial era to about 1789, was marked by "some concern regarding the licensing of teachers but virtually no interest in their education or competences." *(sic)* The second period, from 1789 to 1860, saw "the authority for licensing teachers begin to shift from local and county units to state educational agencies, and the first normal schools ... were established." In the third period, to 1910, there was "expansion of the normal-school idea, and the beginnings of schools of education in the universities and liberal arts colleges." In the fourth period, from 1910 to the present, there has been attention to teacher certification and stricter educational guidelines.

After this history was published, a number of

observers saw a distinct shift in teacher certification toward a greater level of competency, both in professional education and subject mastery. (O'Reilly 1981) However, a number of authors bemoan the range of credentialling requirements across the country. Coye and Haynes (1981) note that 37 of a possible 51 certifying agencies in the United States require only a bachelor's degree for licensing. Two also require a competency exam. One requires completion of an approved program, although the survey did not specify what that program was. Another required the National Teacher Exam. Three granted provisional licenses to bachelor degree holders, while another three required a virtual fifth year of college involving supervised in-field experience.

Shafer (1980) discusses what he sees as a shift from creative curriculum development to accountability in teacher education. He sees greater movement toward performance based or competency based certification. He added, though, that a summary of research on performance-based teacher education showed that system weak in two key areas — what is to be taught and who is to be taught. He concluded by saying that the task for teacher education in the '80s will be to wipe away the effects of the '70s. "Teachers can best be accountable by restoring the caring elements that have been discounted by preoccupation with accountability models and performance-based education programs."

Allan Ornstein (1981) also noted a range of requirements. In the English specialty, for instance, in one state a teacher can get a provisional license with as few as six semester hours of coursework while other states require as many as 36. He also explores the issue of license reciprocity, a distinct area but one of almost equal urgency given the disparate nature of requirements from state to state. Dean Schwanke (1982) doesn't expect this issue to resolve itself easily, especially given the fact the federal government appears to be taking less and less of a role in teacher education guidance, leaving it more and more to the states themselves.

Also addressing the point of some state's licensing teachers who have relatively few hours, Leslie Huling and Gene Hall (1982) comment that it is unrealistic to expect to adequately prepare students to teach if there is limited exposure to education courses, field experience and content areas. They make a pitch for a number of

professional programs and urge prospective students to get as much content background and in-field experience in related-field or minor subjects as possible, as quite often the students end up teaching those subjects rather than the ones they were best trained for. This is particularly true for journalism students who also are not English majors, the authors contend. A first-year publications adviser often ends up teaching regular English as well as advising a newspaper or yearbook. The converse may also be true, they say. A beginning English teacher may end up as newspaper or yearbook adviser, even if the teacher's training is not in journalism.

Robert Bhaerman (1974) suggests erasing the line that divides preservice and inservice teacher education. He argues that teacher education would be more effective. He also notes the myriad problems such a proposal creates, including the difficulty of defining teacher and student roles in such a situation.

In certifying journalism teachers per se, standards for the states vary as widely, if not more widely, than they do for other subjects. In the mid '60s, Kentucky recommended 48 hours of English for a license in English, with up to 15 of those hours allowed in journalism. (Kentucky English Bulletin) There was no specific license in journalism. In 1960, three states allowed journalism as a specified part of an area major in language arts. (Fisher 1961) Twenty-six others required more hours than the minimum for an English license but didn't specify where those hours were to come from. Also, 26 states (and not necessarily the same 26) allowed a varying number of related-field electives to count as part of the major-area hours.

In Missouri (Dvorak 1978) in the mid '70s, the state required 15 semester hours in addition to a life teaching certificate in some other subject to teach journalism. The survey noted that almost 30 percent of the schools offering one journalism or mass media course or more did not have a certified teacher of that subject. An earlier study by the same author (and mentioned in the 1978 survey) showed that in 1975 in all Missouri schools with North Central accreditation, only 63 percent offered journalism or mass media classes taught by certified teachers.

What's the status now? What are the states' re-

quirements for licensing in the journalism area? In a word, mixed. The situation appears as uneven now as it has been for the past few decades. The outlook is not bright unless some central body drafts and distributes model guidelines and the states adopt them. Given the posture of the federal government, such action does not appear likely.

Methodology

All 50 states plus the District of Columbia, Guam and American Samoa were surveyed concerning each unit's recommendations on coursework leading to licensing in journalism at the secondary level.

Each unit's current teacher certification bulletin was consulted if possible. If that was not possible, the chief certification officer was contacted by mail and asked to respond to a short set of questions.

First, it was asked if the unit allowed a special license in journalism. If the answer was affirmative, then each was asked if the unit made any specific recommendations concerning coursework. Also, the unit was asked if English teaching majors were required to take a course in mass communications, mass media or journalism. Finally, each was asked if journalism hours could be counted as electives toward a teaching major in English, and if so, how many hours.

The professional education component for each unit was not compared, only the subject-matter components.

Results

More than half the units surveyed (29 states plus Guam) allow for a specialized license in journalism. In general, this means that a full-time teacher of journalism and journalism-related subjects would have to possess the specialized license. However, it was not clear how much journalism could be taught without holding the specialized license or even without any academic training at all. These particular points must await followup research.

The listing of licenses does not necessarily mean that a student cannot get a teaching license with a journalism-education major in those states that do not

issue a specialized license.

The requirements for a specialized license vary from state to state. Some require simply a departmental major from an institution involved in teacher education. Others mandate a particular sequence of courses. Some of these include distinctly professional experience of a non-education-related bent. Others require nominally experiential credit, such as college publications work.

In the English license area, a total of 19 units (18 states plus Guam) allow some amount of journalism coursework to count as part of an English teaching major. (For some of the other states which do not mandate state requirements but leave them up to individual institutions, journalism also might be counted as part of an English teaching major.) The range is from one course of approximately three semester hours up to 15 hours as a related field within the broader rubric of Language Arts Area Major. Three states specify in their guidelines that teachers of English must have at least one course in mass communications, mass media or journalism.

Requirements for a bachelor's degree in journalism education or English education obviously vary from institution to institution. It was not the purpose of this survey to compare those programs. To have done so would have been unwieldy and probably not very valid, given the unique mission of each respective school. Rather it was the purpose to compare what the respective governing units mandate.

(Stephen Shenton and Anne Smith (1982) did this to some degree in their survey of journalism education programs. They examined a total of 38 programs, looking at such things as course content and requirements. The emphasis appeared to be on practical courses as opposed to historical, interpretative or analytical ones.)

Implications

As one reads over the list of requirements, one is hit by their diversity. There truly is no pattern across the country. It behooves professional journalism education groups to discuss the matter, though, with an eye toward developing a standard for each state to follow. Obviously, the best alternative, in terms of journalism education,

would be the upgrading of journalism to the level of full professional licensure in each state. However, this raises the question of what best serves the local schools. Many administrators and district superintendents may be looking for excuses to end journalism programs. Requiring a licensed teacher might be the excuse that administrator needs to step down on a program.

Perhaps a better alternative might be to move toward requiring each prospective English teacher to take a minimum of one course in mass communications, mass media or journalism. While this would not constitute competency to teach journalism, it would give the English teacher an exposure to the mass media, the major promulgators of the English language today. The course might help that teacher better integrate elements of the mass media into the classroom on an ongoing basis rather than on a specialized or isolated basis.

In addition, prospective English teachers might be required to take the usual one-semester course in the supervision of high school publications that journalism teaching sequences now offer. Including large numbers of non-journalism students might necessitate restructuring the course, or creating two sections — one for majors and one for non-majors. However, experience has shown us that English teachers with limited seniority often are called upon to advise extra-curricular publications. Any help that can be afforded these teachers would prove immensely beneficial.

J.W. Click (1977) presents a model for a short-term training program for high school publications advisers. Stressing work in 11 different components,advisers deficient or weak in journalism could be assisted greatly. Timing and financing of such programs are key questions.

Finally, The Newspaper Fund and certain state high school press associations encourage and financially support inexperienced journalism teachers and publications advisers as they seek that added knowledge and experience. These programs must be continued and expanded upon. More importantly, the advisers who need this kind of assistance must be identified so they can be helped.

There are no panaceas. Even requiring graduate hours to professionalize a provisional license may not help. J. Stephen Sherwin (1971) notes that some states

do not even suggest what those graduate hours should concern.

Given the range of existing programs in journalism, there appears no consensus. It will take concerted effort to effect any change whatsoever.

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Table No. 1
Units that do not have a special license

Alaska
American Samoa
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Georgia
Hawaii
Maine
Massachusetts
Minnesota
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
North Carolina
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Vermont
Wyoming

Table No. 2
State-mandated requirements for a special license

Alabama
Required coursework:
English and advanced composition courses
history of journalism
practical knowledge of layout, advertising, reporting and editing
media law and ethics
radio and television
practicum in non-teaching journalism experience
methods of teaching journalism
supervision of secondary school publications

Arizona
30-hour undergraduate major

Arkansas
24 semester hours

Florida
Bachelor's degree with a major and 12 hours in journalism or in English with 6 hours in journalism

Guam
Minimum of 18 hours of English and at least 5 hours of journalism

Idaho
Minimum of 15 hours of journalism with up to 15 additional hours allowed as electives

Illinois
8 hours in journalism and 16 hours in English; or 18 hours in journalism and 6 hours in rhetoric and composition

Indiana
36 hours including coursework in the following areas:
mass communications
journalistic writing
editing
school publications
advertising or management
photography or graphics

Iowa
30 hours in journalism including coursework in the following areas:

- reporting
- broadcasting
- editing and graphics
- photography
- history of journalism
- mass communication theory
- media law and ethics
- supervision of high school publications
- public relations
- career opportunities in the media
- electronic editing and production

Kansas
Required is a language arts major with 12 hours of journalism covering the following areas:

- basic journalism
- photography
- mass communication
- reporting
- school publications

Kentucky
Undergraduate major

Louisiana
Minimum of 15 hours

Maryland
Undergraduate major

Michigan
30 hours of journalism for a major; 20 hours for a minor

Mississippi
24 hours broken down in the following manner:

- 18 hours of skills and techniques
- 3 hours of professional orientation
- 3 hours of school publications supervision

Missouri
(Currently) 15 hours in journalism added to license in another subject for an extended certificate
(Effective Sept. 1, 1984) 30 hours in journalism broken down in the following manner:

3 hours of newswriting and reporting
3 hours of editing
3 hours of media law and ethics
3 hours of mass communication theory
3 hours of supervision of scholastic publications
15 hours from among photography, graphics, advertising, broadcasting, media and society, practical experiences, or other electives

(Practical experience is recommended although not specifically required)
Extended certificate will require the 15 prescribed hours and 6 hours of electives.

Montana
Undergraduate major

Nebraska
Undergraduate major with license in language arts

Nevada
Undergraduate major of 36 hours in journalism and English, or a minor of 24 hours in journalism and English

New Mexico
Undergraduate major

North Dakota
Undergraduate major

Ohio
20 hours in journalism, including:

introduction to mass media
basic newswriting
editing
supervision of secondary school publications
advanced journalistic writing
electives in journalism and related areas

Oklahoma
6 hours as part of a language arts major

Oregon
Basic journalism license requires 15 hours covering:
- newswriting
- editing
- high school publications
- plus 27 hours in language arts

Standard journalism license requires 9 more hours in journalism and 3 or more additional hours in language arts

Texas
24 hours, with at least 12 of those in advanced level coursework

Utah
Undergraduate major or minor

Virginia
12 hours for journalism. For English-journalism, 6 hours of journalism beyond the 30 required in English

Washington
Undergraduate major

West Virginia
21 hours, covering:
- basic skills (editing, photography, production, advertising)
- economic systems
- media history
- media law and ethics
- mass media and democracy
- public relations
- career counseling and guidance

Wisconsin
Undergraduate major

Table No. 3
Course in mass communications, mass media or journalism required of all English-education majors

Indiana
North Carolina
Oregon

Table No. 4
The following states allow some hours in journalism to count toward a major or certification in English or language arts. Where no number is specified, the state did not place a limit. The limits were left to individual institutions. In some states, individual institutions have their own requirements for a major.

California
Delaware: one course in journalism, radio-TV or film
Florida: 6 hours
Georgia: 15 quarter hours as related field
Guam: 15 hours
Hawaii: 15 hours
Idaho: 15 hours
Indiana: one course required, more allowed as related field
Kansas
Michigan: hours allowed as part of language arts major
Mississippi: 12 hours
Missouri: 6 hours
Nevada
New Jersey
North Carolina: one course required
Oklahoma
Oregon: one course required
Rhode Island
Virginia: 6 hours